



Developing basic education over the years 2015 - 2019

The new curriculum for pre-school and basic education

Finnish National Board of Education approved the new national core curriculum on December 22nd 2014. A local curriculum in accordance with the core curriculum was introduced for classes 1-6 in August 2016. The curriculum will be introduced to classes 7-9 in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Children and young people are guided in assuming more responsibility for their own learning. Every student will be supported in his/her studies.

The pupils set goals, solve problems and assess their learning based on the objectives. The pupils' experiences, feelings, areas of interest and interaction with others lay the foundation for learning. The teacher's role is to teach and activate pupils in lifelong learning. The pupils' individual ways of learning will be acknowledged.

Engagement in learning will be supported

The goal is to develop the learning environment and working methods of the comprehensive school so that they inspire learning. In addition to the classroom, environments outside the school building are encouraged to be used for learning. This includes getting out into nature and visiting museums or businesses.

Games and other virtual environments are also part of the learning environment. Technology plays an increasingly significant role in everyday learning, and pupils can be even more involved in the development and selection of their own ways of learning. Transversal skills are embedded in all subject learning, which give students a possibility to learn skills in addition to knowledge.

Opportunities for pupils to develop their information and communication technology skills as part of all subjects have been improved, with technology being included more in instruction and study.

Programming is included in the goals of mathematics. Pupils learn the fundamentals of programming even at the lower grades.

Seven areas of transversal competence

The curriculum introduces the areas of transversal competences in addition to the content and goals of subjects. There are seven areas:

- Thinking and learning to learn
- Cultural competence, interaction and self-expression
- Taking care of oneself and managing daily life
- Multiliteracy
- ICT Competence
- Working life competence and entrepreneurship
- Participation, involvement, and building a sustainable future

The objective of the new curriculum is to increase pupils' motivation towards studying, to develop learning-to-learn skills, thinking skills and team work skills.

The new curriculum enables applying participative teaching and learning methods more effectively than before. The learner is at the centre of his/her learning. The instruction acknowledges the starting points of children and youths and the particular strength of Finland is the realization of locally-based teaching.

Teachers are encouraged to cooperate more between colleagues, schools and across disciplines. Inter disciplinary learning takes place also more than before.

Further information: Director Jorma Kauppinen (FNBE), tel. 029 533 1091

Curricula: http://oph.fi/saadokset_ja_ohjeet/opetusuunnitelmien_ja_tutkintojen_perusteet

Key project to reform the comprehensive school

New Comprehensive School action plan reforms the comprehensive school over the years 2016-2019. It falls under key project 1 (New learning environments and digital materials to comprehensive schools) under the Government's strategic priority of 'Knowledge and Education'. The new comprehensive school is learner-centred and strengthens the learning and educational equality of every pupil.

Experimental schemes and workshops on new pedagogies, digital learning and new learning environments will be instituted. In the course of the trials and workshops, due consideration will be given to the diversity of learning environments. Full use will be made of the existing networks and peer learning. In addition, the pedagogical use of digital tools and environments is spurred on.

The objective for the new comprehensive school is to have the most competent teachers in the world. The competence development will take place in teacher communities and networks throughout the career.

The school culture in the new comprehensive school is open and communal, and it enables the scaling and establishment of the best practices.

A tutor teacher to every comprehensive school

As a measure of the New Comprehensive School action plan, every comprehensive school is granted a tutor teacher to guide other teachers to support the realization of new pedagogy as well as to forward the digitalization of teaching.

The grants for the training and operation of tutor teachers are 7.5 million euros in total in the autumn of 2016 and approximately 23 million euros in total over the years 2016-2018.

The Centre for Innovations to scale the best practices

A centre for innovations will be established to the Finnish National Board of Education to coordinate experiments based on the most recent research knowledge. Funds will be directed to extensive, research-based practices and pedagogical models that can be scaled. The latest learning solutions and technologies will be applied in the school development. The best models will be scaled widely to schools with the help of key project funding. The operation will be supported with 8 million euros in the autumn of 2016 and with approximately 20 million euros in total over the years 2016-2018.

Vision for the Finnish comprehensive school

As a part of the New Comprehensive School key project, the Comprehensive School Forum will be formed to gather the stakeholders of basic education to envision together. A parliamentary group consisting of each political party in the parliament was appointed to the Comprehensive School Forum in November to create the theses for the future of the comprehensive school. The theses will be published during the autumn of the centenary year.

The Ministry of Education and Culture and the Finnish National Board of Education will organize a municipal circuit in different parts of the country to offer a chance to discuss, brainstorm and strengthen the commitment to develop basic education. The first municipal workshops were held on the week 48 and the circuit will go on with workshops in different localities. The World's Largest Parents' Evening event will be organized on January 18th 2017 in order to let the pupils' parents have a voice in the future of the

comprehensive school. In addition, the internationality of education will be supported in the New Comprehensive School action plan.

Further information: Project Manager Olli Vesterinen (Ministry of Education and Culture), tel. 02953 30123

More: <http://www.minedu.fi/osaaminenjakoulutus/peruskouluuudistus/oppimisymparistot/index.html>

Teacher Education Development Programme

Ministry of Education and Culture appointed the Teacher Education Forum (TEF) to reform the basic, introductory and continuing teacher training, as part of the New Comprehensive School key project. Nearly 100 members and experts of the TEF and its divisions have participated in working on the Teacher Education Development Programme (TEDP). The programme was published on October 13th 2016.

The programme describes the current situation and challenges of teacher education, a vision for teacher education and objectives for future teacher education as well as six strategic guidelines. The implementation of the programme is supported with 7 million euros and altogether 60 million euros in total will be allotted to teachers' competence development over the years 2016-2018.

The following guidelines of the Teacher Education Development Programme determine the direction of teacher education in Finland and in teachers' competence development throughout their career.

1. Teacher's competence into an entity

Teacher's competence will be compiled into a systematic entity by reforming the structures, objectives and operating methods of teacher education. The development of competence will be led with a goal-oriented approach, utilising development plans.

2. Attractive teacher education with well-functioning structures, anticipation and successful student admissions

Successful student admissions will result in the best future teachers. It will be ensured that the demand for teachers and competence needs is anticipated. The attractiveness of teacher education will be ascertained with inspirational and topical education.

3. Teachers as experts creating new pedagogical innovations—Focus in the learners

The programmes, learning environments and working methods of teacher education will be improved to strengthen the development of expertise creating new outcomes and pedagogical innovations. The working methods used in the teacher education and educational institutions will emphasise a learner-oriented, research-based and communal approach.

4. Strengthening teacher education through collaboration

Teacher education will be strengthened by increasingly close collaboration, networking and building a culture of doing things together. Different models of peer support and collaboration will be utilised more effectively.

5. Developing educational institution and community with professional management and leadership.

The strategic leadership and management systems of educational institutions will be strengthened by developing management training. It will be ensured that teacher education prepares teachers with capabilities for taking responsibility and participating in leadership processes.

6. Strengthening the researched-based teacher education

The utilisation of the latest research findings on teaching and learning in teacher education will be strengthened. Teacher education will be developed so that the students learn an exploratory approach that creates new outcomes and innovations to be used in their work as teachers.

Further information: Project Manager Sanna Vahtivuori-Hänninen (Ministry of Education and Culture), tel. 02953 30134

Teacher education development programme

<http://www.minedu.fi/osaaminenjakoulutus/peruskouluuudistus/opettajankoulutusfoorumi/index.html>

Schools on the Move programme

The Schools on the Move programme is part of the Government's key project for reforming the comprehensive school. Its objective is encouraging every child and youth in basic education age to be active for at least an hour a day. The Schools on the Move programme, which will be extended to cover the entire country and all comprehensive school pupils, was devised to achieve this objective. A total of 21 million euros will be allotted to spreading the programme nation-wide over the years 2016-2018.

The Schools on the Move programme is making good headway. Currently, 74% of all comprehensive schools are Schools on the Move. At the time of the Government Programme's completion in summer 2015 this share was 31%. Currently, the programme covers 80% of the pupils and 84% of all municipalities. The activities have thus increased over two-fold during the first year.

Good qualitative results have also been reached through these activities. Research results indicate that taking exercise during the school day increases the pupils' school satisfaction. More than 90% of school employees agree.

The first round of applications for government transfers for integrating exercise in the school day was organised in spring 2016. The second round is forthcoming in early 2017 for the school year 2017-2018. As stated in the Government Programme, this round will be open for not only comprehensive schools but also general upper secondary and vocational institutions.

The new core curricula for basic education and the new physical activity recommendations for children support the realization of physically active schooldays and early childhood education, as well.

Further information: Program Manager Antti Blom (Finnish National Board of Education), tel. 040 348 7316

<http://www.minedu.fi/osaaminenjakoulutus/peruskouluuudistus/liikkuvakoulu/index.html>

<http://www.liikkuvakoulu.fi/>

Strengthening competence in mathematics and natural sciences with the LUMA initiative.

A national development programme was started in 2014 to support children's and youths' competence in mathematics and natural sciences. The aim is to develop a programme of measures of a high international level that is based on scientific research and suitable for basic education. The programme will be established for use in all basic level educational institutions.

The objective of the programme funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture is to improve children's and youths' competence in mathematics and natural sciences as well as to add the joy of insight and learning. The target group of the programme, which is to be effective during the years 2014-2019, are pupils from 6 to 16 years of age and teachers. At the moment, 120 schools are involved and the aim is to extend the initiative to cover 80% of Finnish municipalities during the years 2017-2019.

On the basis of competitive procurement, the national LUMA Finland network was chosen to realize the programme. Cooperation is done between different groups of interest such as educational establishments

of different level, science community, organizations, science centres, museums, libraries and economic life.

LUMA Finland programme is organized into three thematic categories: 1) Inquiry-based learning of mathematics, teaching technology and working life, 2) Inquiry-based learning of natural sciences and environmental education and teaching technology and 3) working life and Technology education: programming, robotics and information society.

Altogether 35 initiatives are realized through the thematic categories. Five million euros have been allotted to the realization of the development programme for the years 2014-2019.

The realization of the initiative is supported by a follow-up assessment which is carried out by the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Helsinki. According to the follow-up assessment of September 2016, the operation of the initiative has developed so that it has gotten closer to the successful operation described in research literature than it was according to the assessment of the spring 2015. Teachers considered the developed innovations technically and pedagogically usable. The assessments given by developers and teachers have been similar.

Further information: Counsellor of Education Aki Tornberg (Ministry of Education and Culture), tel. 02953 30316

The programme for developing multiliteracy

As per the government platform, the programme for developing multiliteracy will be realized as part of the Accessibility of Art and Culture key project.

The programme for developing multiliteracy is aimed for early childhood education, preschool education and education in grades 1 and 2 to further children's skills in multiliteracy. Developing measures to further multiliteracy in early childhood education, preschool education and education in grades 1 and 2 and as their continuum is a central objective of the project.

Developing the multiliteracy skills of children with immigrant background is subject to particular emphasis.

The programme will strengthen the structures and operating culture of early childhood education, preschool education, schools, libraries and cultural fields so they can better support learning multiliteracy.

The programme for developing multiliteracy will be realized during the years 2016-2018 on the basis of competitive procurement.

Further information: Counsellor of Education Heli Nederström (Ministry of Education and Culture), tel. 02953 30122